

# Habitat Project Proposal

**Proposal Title:** Brush Creek Bench Sage Restoration

**Proposal Number:** 315

**DWR Region:** Northeastern Region

**Lead Agency:** DWR

**County:** Uintah

**Project Manager:** Steve Strong

**PM Phone:** 4357816707

**Regional Priority:** Within Focus Area

**Project Type:** Terrestrial Habitat

**Proposed Start Date:** 07/01/2008

**Project Location:** Brush Creek Bench along Diamond Mountain Road. Uintah County, Utah.

**Project Description:** Treat 300 acres of decadent and dead sagebrush with Plateau herbicide and 1-way dixie harrow.

**Description of Problem/Need:** Brush Creek Bench suffered significant sagebrush mortality during the seven years of drought. By the fall of 2002, over 50% of the plants were dead or dying. As of the fall of 2005, some plants showed signs of recovery, but the site was still in a decadent state and in a downward decline. Forage production of living sagebrush was low. Cheatgrass has invaded the site and limited recruitment of sagebrush plants is occurring due to cheatgrass competition. The bench is critical for wintering mule deer from the Diamond Mountain sub-unit and the Vernal sub-unit. The bench also supports wintering sage grouse from the Diamond Mountain population. To maintain viable grouse and mule deer populations, Brush Creek Bench must be restored to a healthy sagebrush community. The site is also used for winter cattle grazing and trailing. Increasing the herbaceous understory will improve grazing on the site.

**Objectives:** Improve and enhance crucial winter range for mule deer, elk, and sage grouse by establishing new sagebrush into sagebrush die-off areas.

**Relevance to Strategic Plans:** This project is relevant to the WAP, Utah Sage Grouse Conservation Strategy, the UDWR's Strategic Plan, UDWR's "Habitat Initiative", and DNR's "Watershed Initiative."

**Potential Risks:** Increase in cheatgrass if Plateau herbicide is not used. Risk of seed establishment failure

**Proposed Methods:** The site will be harrowed once over with a 15' pipe harrow. At the same time a grass/forb seed mix will be applied in front of the harrow using a broadcast seeder. Plateau herbicide will be applied aerially in the fall, preferably before Oct.1. Plateau will be applied at a rate of approximately 8 oz./acre. In December, sagebrush seed will be aerially applied.

**Shapefile Name:** NER\Brush Creek Bench #315

**Seed Source:** GBRC

**UPCD Reg Team Coord Date:** 01/29/2008

**Proposed NEPA Action:**

**Proposed Arch Action:** BLM is conducting NEPA and arch should be included in that. 2-24-06 kad

☒ **Vegetation Monitoring** ☐ **Wildlife Monitoring**

**Monitoring Details:** GBRC established a trend study on this site in 2002 to evaluate dead sagebrush recovery. This study will be used for long-term monitoring of the site. A range trend site was also established in 2007. BLM has established other vegetation studies on this site. Repeat photography points will also be established for long-term trends.

**Cons. Outreach Details:**

## SPECIES BENEFITING

Mule Deer

Greater Sage-grouse

Shrubsteppe Birds

Elk

Domestic Livestock

## LAND OWNERSHIP

Owner	Acres
BLM	300

# Habitat Project Proposal

Total	300
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## PROPOSED FUNDING

Source	Amount Requested	Date Approved	Amount Approved
DNR Watershed (FY09)	\$11,550.00		
BLM HLI	\$16,550.00		
MDF	\$20,000.00		
Habitat Acct 174	\$5,000.00		\$0.00
Totals	\$53,100.00		\$0.00

## PROPOSED BUDGET

Item	Description	DWR Account	In Kind/ Partner Contrib.
Materials and Supplies	Plateau Herbicide	\$5,000.00	\$0.00
Contractual Services	Herbicide Application	\$6,000.00	\$0.00
Seed (GBRC)	Seed @ \$80/acre	\$24,000.00	\$0.00
Contractual Services	Aerial Seed Application	\$2,100.00	\$0.00
Contractual Services	1-Way Dixie Harrow Treatment	\$15,000.00	\$0.00
Motor Pool	Vehicle Mileage	\$1,000.00	\$0.00
Totals		\$53,100.00	\$0.00

## PROPOSED FUNDING ALLOCATION

Funding Type	Funding Percent
Big Game	100
Total	100.00%

## Project Map:

